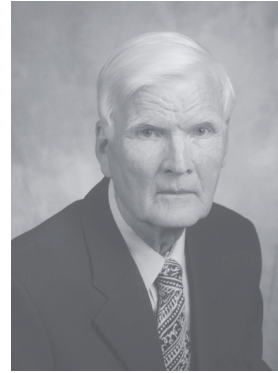


Tauno Palva

* 17.10.1925 † 27.4.2019



TAUNO PALVA, emeritus professor of otorhinolaryngology at the University of Helsinki, passed away suddenly while golfing in Espoo, Finland, at the age of 93 on 27th April 2019. Palva was born on 17th October 1925 into a farming family in Hyvinkää, about fifty kilometres north of Helsinki. At the age of 15, after his father's death he took over responsibility for the fairly large family farm while still continuing with his higher secondary school studies by himself in the evenings. At the age of 18 he took part in the fierce battles of the Second World War as the leader of an infantry squad.

After the war, he decided to leave farming and take up medical studies, graduating from the University of Turku, in 1950. He defended his doctoral thesis, *Finnish Speech Audiometry. Methods and clinical applications*, at the same university as early as 1952. In this work he studied and developed the necessary Finnish-language words and nomenclature for speech audiometry, an important tool for examining hard-of-hearing patients. In 1952-53 he spent a post-doctoral year in the United States, where he continued his audiological studies at Washington University in St. Louis. He became a specialist in otorhinolaryngology in 1954, docent in clinical au-

diology in 1955 and docent in otorhinolaryngology in 1958.

Tauno Palva was appointed as the first professor of otorhinolaryngology in the new Faculty of Medicine at the University of Oulu in Finland in 1963, and continued in this position as chairman and head of the Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) Department until 1974. During this period he turned an almost non-existent unit into a modern academic department, serving the whole of northern Finland. Simultaneously, he had also other administrative duties, serving as dean of the Faculty of Medicine in 1964-65 and vice-rector of the university in 1965-68, and also as vice-chairman of the Board of Directors of Oulu University Hospital in 1972-74.

During that period Tauno Palva also became interested in bronchology and otology in addition to audiology, and he subsequently published a detailed monography on mediastinoscopy in 1964 and another on the human cochlear aqueduct in 1969. He became especially famous as an otosurgeon, to the extent that the concept of the "Palva flap" has gained a lasting place in the world's ENT literature.

In 1974 Tauno Palva was appointed professor and chairman of the Helsinki

University Department of Otorhinolaryngology and head of its clinic, positions which he held until his retirement in 1990. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of Helsinki University Hospital from 1975 to 1990. During this time, he developed his large department into an internationally renowned centre for top-quality knowledge, skills and research. Palva was a highly esteemed teacher, scientist and doctor, his special interests in Helsinki being middle and inner ear diseases and skull base surgery. He also initiated co-operation with neurosurgeons.

Tauno Palva published more than 330 scientific papers in major international journals, typically representing attempts to solve clinical problems using basic research and clinical methodologies. He was author, co-author or editor in many international and national textbooks, and he received many awards, honours and medals, including the most distinguished otological prize of all, the Shambaugh Prize in Otology, in 1981. As early as 1969 he was granted the prestigious honour of Commander of the Order of the White Rose of Finland by the President of Finland.

He became a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 1985.

Palva was invited to give numerous honorary lectures around the world, such as the James Yearsley Memorial Lecture in London in 1974, the William Wilde Memo-

rial Lecture in Dublin in 1987, the Carl-Axel Hamberger Memorial Lecture in Stockholm in 1990 and the Wilhelm Meyer Memorial Lecture in Copenhagen in 1992. He was an honorary member of seven national ENT societies and honorary president of the Corlas Meeting in Helsinki in 2003. He was skilled in six languages. He was on the editorial board of numerous ENT journals - still being active in this way up to the time of his death.

After his retirement, still devoted to his profession, he continued instructing young ENT doctors in ear microsurgery in the department's temporal bone laboratory - and only a few years ago he personally donated funds to the laboratory to provide it with state-of-the-art equipment. Since then the laboratory has borne his name. He also provided in his will for the establishment of the Tauno Palva Foundation, making substantial resources available for supporting the work of the laboratory.

Tauno Palva was also a passionate golfer, and became a highly skilled veteran player in his later years, winning numerous prizes.

He was left a widower in 2016, when his wife, Vuokko, to whom he was married for 65 years, passed away. He is now missed by their two children Kirsti and Kimmo.

*Obituary by Pekka Karma,
Antti Palva, Heikki Palva
and Tapio Palva*